



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 2
290 BROADWAY
NEW YORK, NY 10007-1866

FEB 27 2006

Douglas A. Currey, Regional Director
NYSDOT Region 11
Hunters Point Plaza
47-40 21st Street
Long Island City, New York 11101

Dear Mr. Currey:

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the final EIS for the project entitled **Willis Avenue Bridge Reconstruction, Bronx County and New York County, New York** (CEQ #20060019). Our review was conducted pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act.

The Federal Highway Administration, in cooperation with the New York State Department of Transportation and the New York City Department of Transportation, propose to replace the Willis Avenue Bridge over the Harlem River in Bronx County and New York County, New York. The final EIS further evaluates the off-line replacement with a new swing span and new steel approaches alternative.

EPA commented on the draft EIS for this project in October 2005, wherein we rated the project with Environmental Concerns (EC), and insufficient information (2). This rating was based upon the concerns with the projects impacts to the Harlem River and water quality from the removal of the old bridge, the proposed dredging, and construction of the new bridge. We also asked for further information regarding the removal and disposal of the old bridge.

The final EIS adequately addressed our concerns. We support and encourage FHWA's and NYSDOT's efforts to find beneficial uses for the old bridge material and reiterate our support for the stormwater control measures for the new bridge. We also recommend that the project sponsors diligently enforce the quality control contract specification provisions related to the prevention of demolition and construction material and waste discharge to wetlands and water bodies.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Should you have any questions concerning this letter, please contact David Carlson of my staff at (212) 637-3502.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "John Filippelli", is written over a horizontal line.

John Filippelli, Chief
Strategic Planning and Multi-Media Programs Branch